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STORY GINA MAKKAR | PHOTOGRAPHY RYAN FUNG

THE WILLOWDALE AREA IN NORTH YORK IS A VIBRANT COMMUNITY THAT OFFERS UPSCALE LIVING IN A TRANQUIL COMMUNITY SETTING WITH PLENTY OF GREEN SPACE, SHOPPING AND RESTAURANT EXPERIENCES.

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Inside, unfettered sightlines create flow and harmony from front to back. Thoughtful details were incorporated to provide unity while adding dimension, from the wide-plank oak flooring to beautiful natural stone. Marble with a bold black border marks the entryway from the rest of the home. Wood slat dividers and intricate ceiling details throughout help define and anchor each space. “We designed for a family that would like to entertain and would use the open-concept living environment that was thoughtfully

designed. We wanted to connect all the spaces through the detailing on the floor and the detailing on the ceiling and connecting the millwork,” says Bahar. Part of the success rests in the due diligence the group embarked on to define the elements that would appeal to potential buyers and create an elevated, one-of-a-kind design unique to the area. “We created a truly original home that wasn’t seen in other spaces,” says Shima. “That is the reason it sold in such a short time.” *Continued on page 44*

“WE WANTED TO CONNECT ALL THE SPACES THROUGH THE DETAILING ON THE FLOOR AND THE DETAILING ON THE CEILING AND CONNECTING THE MILLWORK.”
~Bahar Zaeem



TOP: A linear fireplace is the focal point in the living room furnished with modern comfortable seating. **LEFT:** Visual barriers in main living areas are avoided with simple design elements like the glass staircase. **ABOVE LEFT & RIGHT:** People often think of texture in terms of textiles and woven fabrics, but tiles and solid surfaces offer wonderful textural backdrops as well. **OPPOSITE:** A charcoal room divider is a unique architectural feature incorporating the same stone that surrounds the fireplace.



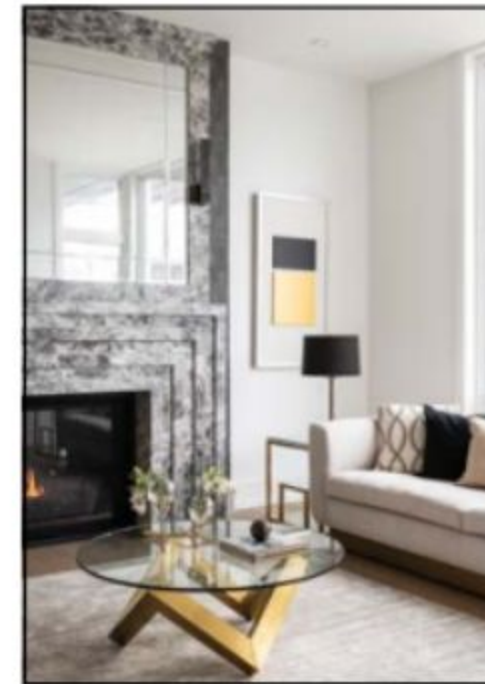
feature

Bahar Zaeem and Shima Radfar of RZ Interiors are changing the landscape of the neighbourhood with this beautiful custom modern build. They worked with Toronto homebuilders **Pirooz Sarvi and Mohamed Azizi from Vicolo Construction**. The 5,000 sq. ft. four-bedroom home was built and customized to meet the needs of a young family, with plenty of room to grow. Collaborating from the beginning, the team worked toward a common goal – to create a home that would appeal to the niche market they were representing. “When we started, we already knew who the potential buyer would be in terms of ‘what is their lifestyle,’ and ‘how do they live,’” says Bahar. “The overall build was based on that.”

The developing area is a blend of traditional and timeless interspersed with modern new builds. The quality and overall aesthetic of the homes are designed to appeal to the lifestyle of the family seeking a home in the area. “We felt modern is interesting



LEFT: The sleek and streamlined kitchen is made cosy with warm wood cabinetry and gold hardware. **BELOW:** It's all in the details with this build. The layered marble fireplace surround adds texture and dimension. **TOP & BOTTOM RIGHT:** The open floor plan is full of interesting architectural details, like the sculptural wall divider and the designer ceiling with LED lighting.



Bahar Zaeem and Shima Radfar of RZ Interiors



The integrated storage and interior cabinet lighting increase functionality by illuminating the interior.

for the buyer of the future, because that is what the young generation in the area are looking for,” says Pirooz. “When we went to see the architect, the design fit within the neighbourhood, but it was different from others we had seen. It wasn't something that would repel some people and detract others. We were sure once we incorporated it, we would get good results.”

“It was a bold addition to the line of homes,” adds Bahar. “When you walk by it, you can't miss it.”

The build began in November 2020 and finished in the spring of 2022, a small feat considering pandemic delays in production and supplies in the construction world. The distinctive exterior boasts a flat roof, clean lines and expansive windows. Stone blends with industrial metal to delineate and highlight architectural elements. *Continued on page 41*

feature



ABOVE LEFT: The designers were not afraid to use dramatic colours to add definition and create strong focal points. Here, the rich tones of the fireplace add warmth. **ABOVE RIGHT:** The en suite cabinetry is functional and sculptural. **BELOW:** To draw the eye away from the bulkhead and effectively use the space, the designers integrated a cosy nook by the window in the primary bedroom.

The teams worked in synergy on many of the elements throughout, a testament to how the right partnership is vital when it comes to design and execution. The cantilever-style island required a great deal of coordination to ensure the structure's stability. "We can design without limits, but for the execution of the design, the builder needs to be open to new ideas to collaborate with the designer and be able to execute the idea without saying 'it can't be done,'" Shima says.

"RZ did an amazing job in the kitchen with the table integrated into the island," adds Pirooz. "It's one of the most beautiful kitchens we've seen in the whole area. It really helped set it apart from a buyers' perspective."

Using quality materials throughout was an important must on the home's wish list. The reverse Shaker-style cabinetry is carved out of painted MDF for a continuous pattern that creates a seamless aesthetic. High-end melamine used for the upper-level cabinetry is beautiful and durable. Crystal marble in the main-floor living room provides a clean profile and dramatic focal point. *Continued on page 46*

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RZ INTERIORS
Interior Design Consultants

Bahar: 647.834.6547
Shima: 647.298.9031
info@r-zinteriors.com
r-zinteriors.com
@r-zinteriors_

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